

Remarks

Claims 1-24 are pending in the application. By the present amendment, independent claims 1, 12, and 15 have been amended. Reconsideration of all pending claims in light of any amendments made thereto and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claim 1 has been rejected as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 549,924 to Leistner et al. Claim 1, as amended, recites elements of an apparatus for moving a latching pin a lateral distance between a latch position and an unlatch position to connect first and second separable members. A flange is provided on the first separable member and a latch mechanism is provided on the second separable member. The latch mechanism includes a rotatable handle that defines a plane of rotation when rotated about an axis of rotation and a latching pin connected to the rotatable handle. The central axis of the latching pin is substantially perpendicular to the plane of rotation and substantially coincident with the axis of rotation of the handle. A latching pin guide engages and guides the latching pin along the central axis in response to rotation of the handle. A keeper mechanism defines a channel within which the latching pin is present when the latching pin is in the latch position and the mounting flange on the first separable member is inserted into the channel when the first and second separable members are to be connected. The flange includes a hole through which the latching pin passes to connect the first and second separable members.

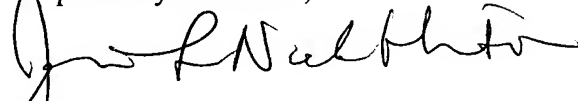
Leistner does not disclose each element of claim 1. For example, Leistner does not disclose a keeper mechanism on the same separable member as the latch mechanism. Nor does Leistner disclose a flange on the opposite separable member that includes a hole into which the latching pin passes when the separable members are to be connected. For at least these reasons, claim 1 and its depending claims 2-14, and 22 are in condition allowance.

Independent claims 12 and 15 have been amended in a manner similar to claim 1, and also now recite a keeper mechanism on the same separable member as the latch mechanism and a flange on the other separable member that has a hole through which the latching pin passes when the separable members are to be connected. Claims 12 and 15 and their depending claims 13-14 and 16-21, and 23-24 are therefore in condition for allowance.

All claims pending in the application are in condition for allowance and a notice of allowance is solicited.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any required fee under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17 in connection with this communication to our Deposit Account No. 23-0630.

Respectfully submitted,



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